

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for removing gas from comminuted lignocellulose material, wherein the material composed in a gravitationally lowering column is heated to a degasification temperature with steam supplied essentially to traverse the column, ~~characterized in that~~ and wherein the heated material is directed to advance as a composed bed through a gas removal section, ~~that~~ the temperature of the material bed is maintained at the degasification temperature in said gas removal section by introducing steam beneath the material bed, and ~~that~~ gas is removed from the top of the material bed.
2. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein material is heated to a temperature of 80°C to 160°C for degasification.
3. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with claim 2, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the material is heated to a temperature of 100°C to 130°C for degasification.

4. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the material is heated to the degasification temperature in a time ranging from 20 to 180 seconds.
5. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the material is retained as said composed bed in the essentially horizontal advancing movement ranging from 10 to 65 minutes.
6. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the condensate formed in the heating is removed.
7. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with claim 3, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the material, subsequent to the heating, is maintained as said composed bed ~~in at~~ a pressure essentially corresponding to the steam pressure at the prevailing temperature.
8. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for implementing the method of claim 1, the apparatus consisting of an upright silo (2) having an upper part and a lower part and an intermediate part therebetween, the upper part being furnished with means to receive the material to be treated, a longitudinal tubular vessel (1) positioned essentially horizontally and connected to the lower part of the silo for receiving the material from the silo, and conveying means (3) in the tubular vessel for transportation the material through said vessel, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the silo within the intermediate part is furnished with means (5,6,7,8,9) for supplying fluid having an elevated

temperature to the material essentially transversally to the advancing direction of the material in the silo.

9. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 8, **characterized** ~~in that~~ wherein said means for supplying fluid having an elevated temperature ~~are~~ is a means for supplying steam.
10. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 9, **characterized** ~~in~~ wherein the means for supplying fluid having an elevated temperature ~~are~~ is a means for supplying the steam totally over a section of the intermediate part.
11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 8, **characterized** ~~in~~ wherein the conveying means (3) consist of separate parallel lamellae (31) in the lower part of the tubular vessel (1), positioned in the longitudinal direction of the said vessel and extending essentially over the length of said vessel, each lamella having a driving means for moving it in the longitudinal direction for a certain length back and forth.
12. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 11, **characterized** ~~in~~ wherein the tubular vessel (1) is furnished with inlets (20) for supplying steam beneath the lamellae (31), with outlets (18) for removing gas from the upper part of the tubular vessel, and with outlets (19) for removing liquid from the lower part of the tubular vessel.